UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CONF.91/L.8
7 November 1997

ENGLISH ONLY

SEVENTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON THE STANDARDIZATION OF
GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES
New York, 13-22 January 1998
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE SIXTH CONFERENCE

Report of the East Mediterranean Division (other than Arabic) for the period 1992-1997

Paper submitted by Israel**

* E/CONF.91/1.

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1 The Toponymic Database

The map-making authorities within the Division are proceeding with the production of the digital GIS-derived map series on various scales. In particular, the new 1:25,000 scale topographic map series is based chiefly on the digital toponymic database. This includes all names officially conferred or ratified which, therefore, have legal status. Among these are the names of all populated places, all archaeological sites and ruins, all natural topographic features (orographic, hydrographic etc.) including all nature reserves and national parks, as well as names of interurban road and transport systems such as road interchanges and major junctions.

Thematic maps, and in particular the 1:50,000 scale geological maps produced in the division as well as the very popular 1:50,000 Nature Trail series, carry the names appearing in the topographic base maps taken from the digital toponymic data base, whereas names pertaining to the thematic component of the map (chiefly geological terminology in the first case and environmental as well as touristic nomenclature in the second) are supplied by the respective professional bodies.

As was the case with the analog maps in the past, the new digital town maps and plans derived partly from the national GIS carry names received from the respective municipal authorities, not necessarily in digital format. Street and other names within the areas of municipalities and other local authorities such as local and regional councils are not governed by the Government Names Commission and are, in most cases, conferred by local names boards, sometimes lacking the uniformity accorded by decisions of the national names authority.

2 Review of Transliteration Systems

Forty years have passed since the present romanization system of Hebrew was approved by the Academy of the Hebrew Language (1956) and published in the Official Gazette No. 519 of the State of Israel in 1957. An even longer time has elapsed since the introduction of the transliteration system from Arabic into Hebrew (1941). These two transliteration systems have been consistently applied in all official maps of Israel. However, while also used in signposting on the interurban road net, there have been various bodies, public and private, who deviated from these rules in dealing with geographical names. This fact resulted from the different linguistic background of these bodies, often employing names in phonetic transcription and not in reversible transliteration. In particular this was evident in romanization used in touristic texts (e.g. brochures, guidebooks and maps) published in the different languages spoken by the tourists, which often make use of phonetic transcription into these separate languages.

The predominant language of the Division, namely Hebrew, has been under review as regards orthography in maps (with "plene" spelling replacing vocalized orthography in all official digital maps produced within the Division [1]) and concerning romanization [2]. Transliteration from Arabic into Hebrew is also being reviewed.

3 Terminology – List of Generic Terms in Hebrew

A new list of Hebrew generic terms in toponymy was prepared in 1994. This includes all generic terms appearing in Israeli geographical names. In this connection it may be mentioned that the descriptive term (not a generic) *Irish bridge* appears 162 times in the topographic maps of Israel. A study of the relation of this term to Israeli geography and cartography has been made, based, among others, on material kindly provided by the chairman of the Celtic division, Mr. Art Ó Maolfabhail.

4 Inter-Divisional Cooperation

Since the Sixth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names the East Mediterranean (other than Arabic) linguistic-geographical division has taken part in toponymic activities of three other divisions. Following the first UNGEGN training course in toponymy for Southern African countries held in 1992 in Pretoria, South Africa, the East Mediterranean division was again involved in the second course organized by the Africa South division. The chairman of the East Mediterranean division was one of the lecturers at this course held in Pretoria, Transvaal (with fieldwork in the Orange Free State and in Lesotho), presenting talks on, and practical exercises in, (1) *Introduction to Toponymy*, (2) *Recording and Storage of Geographical Names*, (3) *Name Lists and Gazetteers*, (4) *The Standardization of Toponymic Terminology*, (5) *Languages and Scripts of the World*, (6) *Translation, Transliteration and Transcription in Maps and Atlases*, and (7) *Toponymy as a Political Tool*.

In Seoul, Korea (Asia East) the division chairman lectured at two seminars, one national (in 1994) and one international (1997), on the topic of the name *Sea of Japan/East Sea*, a political-toponymic problem brought before the UN Group of Experts and the Conferences on several occasions. In 1974 the representative of the division took part as lecturer in a toponymic seminar held by the Department of Survey and Land Information (DOSLI) in Wellington, New Zealand (Asia, South-East and Pacific, South-West division).

Some years ago the Dutch- and German-Speaking division (DGSD) of UNGEGN decided to produce a German version of the *Glossary of Toponymic Terminology* adapted to the particular needs of the member-states of this division. In 1993 a tentative translation into German was produced, and the chairman of the East Mediterranean division, as editor of the *Glossary of Toponymic Terminology* was asked to review it and add comments and corrections. An improved final version was later produced, with the collaboration of numerous members of the German Ständiger Ausschuß für Geographische Namen (StAGN), the Dutch- and German-Speaking division and the editor of the UNGEGN *Glossary*. This appeared as *Deutsches Glossar zur toponymischen Terminologie*, published by the Institut für Angewandte Geodäsie, Frankfurt am Main, in 1995.

5 Toponymic Literature

The first official gazetteer of the division, which previously was available only in digital format or as a computer printout of same, appeared in 1994 also in book form as *Toponomasticon – Geographical Gazetteer of Israel* [3]. This is a completely bilingual (Hebrew-English) production.

The Division is also represented in two publications produced by the University of Pretoria, South Africa, namely *An Introduction to Toponymy* [4] and *Training Course in Toponymy for Southern Africa* [5].

6 Information Paper on UNGEGN and the Conferences for ICOS

At the request of the the Board of Directors of the International Council of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) at its meeting in Oslo in June 1994, a detailed informative paper on the aims and activities of the United

Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names and the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names has been written by the chairman of the East Mediterranean division. This appeared in *ONOMA* in 1995 [6].

7 Education

Courses in Toponymy continued to be held in the Department of Geography of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, reported upon in detail already to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, 1987 [7] and recently in 1996 [8]. A new training manual for these courses has been written.

Notes

[1] "Plene vs. vocalized orthography of names in Hebrew GIS-derived digital topographic maps." Seventh UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, New York, 1998. Paper submitted by Israel.

[2] "Considerations for and against the revision of a romanization system – the case of Hebrew". Seventh UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, New York, 1998. Paper submitted by Israel.

[3] N. Kadmon, *Toponomastican – Geographical Gazetteer of Israel*. Survey of Israel and "Carta", Jerusalem, 1994.

[4] — *An Introduction to Toponymy – Theory and Practice of Geographical Names*. University of Pretoria, 1993.

[5] United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, *Training Course in Toponymy for Southern Africa*. Edited by P.S. Hattingh, N. Kadmon, P.E. Raper and I. Booysen. University of Pretoria, 1993.

[6] N. Kadmon, "Luxor or al-Uqsur – Skagerak, Skagerack or Skagerrak? The United Nations and the Standardization of Geographical Names". *ONOMA*, vol. 32 (1994-1995), pp. 140-154.

[7] "Toponymy courses at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem". Fifth UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, 1987, vol. II, Technical Papers, pp. 467-469.

[8] N. Kadmon, "Toponymy as a University discipline". 19th International Congress of Onomastic Science, Aberdeen, 1996.